Biology 4900 – Special Topics in Epidemiology (Fall 2018)

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Office Hours: My office hours are as follows, and by appointment.
Mondays 9:25-10:40 in 230 Sequoya
Tuesdays 11-12 in Lower Pope
Wednesdays 9:25-11:10 in Peeples Hall, second floor
Thursdays 11-12 in Lower Pope, and 1:30-4:30 in 230 Sequoya

Course Information
(adapted from Washington University School of Medicine)


Course Prerequisite(s): BIOL 3400K and 3 additional upper level Biology courses.

Course Description: This course is designed to introduce students to the basic principles of epidemiology. Focus is on methods used to collect data and establish causation; and to apply epidemiologic methods to public health policy.

Student Learning Outcomes: At the end of this course you should be able to:

1. Understand the criteria commonly used to evaluate causal relationships.
2. Evaluate the quality and comparability of data; define appropriate comparison groups for epidemiologic studies.
3. Understand the major study designs for obtaining quantitative information relevant to population health research questions from and be able to select the most appropriate design for different hypotheses.
4. Understand and calculate commonly used health measures and select appropriate methods for estimating such measures.
5. Interpret descriptive and inferential statistics resulting from data analysis and draw relevant conclusions.
6. Critique the study design and quantitative methods used in published literature and appropriately interpret the findings.
7. Describe a public health problem in terms of magnitude, person, time and place.
8. Formulate and apply epidemiologic methodology to identify a specific public health problem, develop a hypothesis, and design a study to investigate the issue.
Assessment:

Your grade in the course will be based on the following. Please see the detailed rubric in our Desire to Learn (D2L) course site to see how each assignment will be assessed.

There are 1000 points available:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graded Item</th>
<th>Points (Percentage)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 Lecture Exams (100 Points each)</td>
<td>300 (30%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>250 (25%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>150 (15%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignments</td>
<td>200 (20%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Article Critique</td>
<td>100 (10%)</td>
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Final Grade Assignment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90-100%</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-89%</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-79%</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-69%</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;60%</td>
<td>F</td>
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- **Lecture Exams**: Exams will be composed of multiple choice, matching, true/false, and short answer questions.

- **Participation**: This is based on regular attendance with significant, active contributions to in-class discussions. In addition, students will submit a final reflection paper at the close of the course. More detailed information will be provided.

- **Assignments**: There will be quizzes and problem sets given throughout the semester via the course website. You are expected to uphold the academic code of conduct on your online course work. Some will cover new material and some will review material that is considered pre-requisite to the course.

- **Presentation**: Each student will select a topic and do a 20-minute PowerPoint presentation that includes an overview of the epidemiology of the topic, methods used, as well as discussion of the findings. Discussion should focus on understanding and interpreting the conflicting findings in light of epidemiologic methods employed (e.g. study design, sampling, data collection, analysis). Students will provide the citation(s) to the professor one week prior to the presentation for distribution to the rest of the class.

Using Desire to Learn and Other Technologies

We will utilize Desire to Learn (D2L) and other technologies in every class meeting. On the first day of class, I will provide an in-class demonstration.

It is recommended that you utilize the grade book feature in D2L to keep up with grading throughout the term and ensure that students always know their standing in terms of their overall grade. This clarity reduces student anxiety and helps the course proceed smoothly.
Attendance Policy

**Class:** Attendance is required. You are responsible for keeping up with any material you missed.

**Exams:** You must be present for exams. Make-ups will be given for excused absences only according to the policy outlined below. If you are absent for one exam, the score you earn on the final exam will be used in place of the missing exam grade. If you do not miss any exams, the percent correct you earn on the final exam will be used to replace your lowest exam score (assuming the final exam score is higher). All exam papers must be returned to the instructor after they are reviewed in class.

**Excused Absences:** Students are granted excused absences from class for the following reasons: an officially approved DSC group activity, documented court activity, documented military activity, or documented illness. When feasible, the student must notify the instructor prior to the occurrence of any excused absences, but in no case shall such notification occur more than one week after the absence. Appropriate documentation for all excused absences is required.

**Make-Up Policy for Excused Absences:** Arrangement to make up missed major examinations and course assignments due to properly authorized excused absences must be initiated by the student within 3 days of the students’ return to class.

COURSE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

**CARE Team**

(Last Modified May 2018)

The Campus Assessment, Response, and Evaluation Team, also known as CARE, at Dalton State College engages in proactive and collaborative approaches to identify, assess, and mitigate potential risks associated with members of the campus who exhibit concerning or unusual behaviors. Report a concern through the CARE Reporting Form. Should you have questions, contact the Dean of Students’ Office at 706.272.4428.

**Disability Access**

(From Disability Access website)

Students with disabilities or special needs are encouraged to contact Disability Access. In order to make an appointment or to obtain information on the process for qualifying for accommodations, the student should visit the Disability Access Library Guide or contact the Disability Access office.

**Contact information**

Andrea Roberson, Associate Director of Disability Access and Student Support Services
Pope Student Center, upper level
706-272-2524
aroberson@daltonstate.edu
Ethical Conduct
(Last Modified May 2018)

Academic Dishonesty Cheating and plagiarism are a part of the Dalton State Student Code of Conduct, which can be found in its most updated form at Dalton State Student Code of Conduct. Any assistance provided or given in any way toward work in a class constitutes cheating, unless such behavior is authorized by your instructor. Additionally, any use of the ideas or words of others should be noted, or this will constitute plagiarism. Using another students’ work or collaborating on an assignment not designated as collaborative is unacceptable. Furthermore, presenting work that was completed for another class, while not plagiarism technically, is not the same as presenting original work, and is therefore unacceptable unless it has been authorized by your instructor. For more details on what Dalton State considers to be Academic Dishonesty, please review the Student Code of Conduct. Instructors will assign grades based on classroom performance. Additional sanctions may be provided as a learning experience from the Student Conduct process.

Classroom Behavior Dalton State is committed to respect via the Roadrunner Respect pledge. To learn more, please visit Roadrunner Respect. "I pledge to show my fellow Roadrunner students, faculty, staff, and administration respect by treating others the way they want to be treated and by thinking about others first before making decisions that might affect them."

Course Withdrawal Statement
(Last Modified May 2018)

The last day to drop this class without penalty (a W or a required signature) is Thursday, October 19. If you complete the proper paperwork to drop the course by this date, you will be assigned a grade of W. After this date, withdrawal without penalty is permitted only in cases of Extreme Hardship as determined by the Vice President for Academic Affairs; otherwise a grade of WF will be issued. Students who fail to complete the official drop/withdrawal procedure will receive the grade of F. Withdrawal from class is a student responsibility. The grade of W counts as hours attempted for the purposes of financial aid.

Full Withdrawal Statement
(Last Modified May 2018)

The proper form for withdrawing from all classes at the college after the official drop/add period but before the published withdrawal date (Academic Campus Calendar) is the Schedule Adjustment Form. All students must meet with a staff member at the Dean of Students office in the upper-level of the Pope Student Center to initiate the withdrawal process and complete an exit interview. After meeting with the staff member, students will then finalize the withdrawal process in the Enrollment Services Office.
Grade Appeals
(Last Modified May 2018)

A student may file a formal challenge to a grade if there is unequivocal evidence that one or more of the following applies:

a) It was a direct result of arbitrary and capricious conduct on the part of the instructor;
b) The instructor discriminated against the student on the basis of a protected classification as the term is defined by Federal Law, Georgia State Law, or the Administrative Code of the City of Dalton;
c) The grade was incorrectly calculated;
d) A clerical error occurred in recording the grade; or
e) A mitigating circumstance prevented the student from completing a final assignment or attending the final exam.

To appeal a grade, the student must notify the instructor in writing no later than two days after the posting of final grades. See Grade Changes and Appeals ix for the complete documentation.

Academic Progression
(Last Modified May 2018)

To remain in academically good standing, students must maintain an institutional GPA of 2.0 or higher. Students who do not maintain a 2.0 move through a sequence of statuses ranging from Academic Warning to Academic Probation to Academic Suspension to Academic Dismissal. See Academic Progress x for the complete documentation.

Title IX Information
Student Sexual Misconduct Policy xi
(Last Modified May 2018)

In accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (“Title IX”), the University System of Georgia (USG) does not discriminate on the basis of sex in any of its education programs or activities or in employment. The USG is committed to ensuring a safe learning and working environment for all members of the USG community. To that end, this Policy prohibits sexual misconduct, as defined herein.

Please visit the Title IX at Dalton State web page xii for additional information on the policy xiii, How to Report xv, Resources xv, and Campus Programs xvi.
House Bill 280
(Last Modified May 2018)

House Bill 280 commonly known as the “campus carry” legislation, is effective as of July 1, 2017.

Officially Approved DSC Groups and Activities
(Last Modified May 2018)

When students are engaged in officially approved Dalton State groups or activities that require them to participate in events off campus during school days, they shall be treated similarly to any faculty or staff member acting in that same capacity. Thus, just as faculty and staff have excused absences from their regular work schedules, students shall be excused from class without penalty if they are off campus representing Dalton State College in an approved, official capacity during their regular class time. Examples include presenting a paper or otherwise participating in a conference, attending a University System student affairs event, participating in intercollegiate competition (athletic or academic), participating in an approved field trip, etc. Just as faculty and staff members are required to submit Request to Travel forms for approval, in order to be excused, the student needs to provide the following information to the instructor prior to the date when he/she will be absent from class:

- notification of the event (in the case of athletics, students should provide each instructor a schedule of away events at the beginning of the semester or as soon as possible after the schedule is available);
- estimated time of departure from and return to campus (for example, if a student has an away game in the evening and will not be leaving campus until 3:00, he/she will not be excused from classes prior to that time on that day; similarly, if the event is in the morning and the student will be returning to campus during the day, he/she is expected to attend any class scheduled after the return trip); and
- contact information for the person or organization sponsoring/authorizing the student’s participation in the event

The student shall be allowed to make up any work missed during the time he/she is off campus representing DSC in an official capacity. He/she shall discuss what will be missed with the instructor and make arrangements to make up any assignments, tests, presentations, etc. scheduled on that date.